

## CHAPTER V

### SPRINGFIELDS, ENFIELDS, AND BROWNING'S

#### RIFLES

**D**URING the years immediately preceding our entrance into the war there was much discussion within the War Department, as well as in the country at large, of the need for increased military preparedness. Reference to the department reports for 1914, 1915, and 1916 shows that what was then considered as the best military and civilian opinion was agreed that the army that would have to be called into the field in any large emergency was one of 500,000 men.

In these reports attention was called to the fact that while our available resources in trained men, in airplanes, and in machine guns were entirely inadequate, our reserve stocks of rifles and small-arms ammunition were sufficient for even a larger Army than the half million suggested.

On the outbreak of hostilities there were on hand nearly 600,000 Springfield rifles of the model of 1903. This arm is probably the best Infantry rifle in use in any army, and the number on hand was sufficient for the initial equipment of an army of about 1,000,000 men. What no one foresaw was that we should be called upon to equip an army of nearly 4,000,000 men in addition to furnishing rifles for the use of the Navy.

The emergency was met in several different ways. The available Springfields were used to equip the Regular Army and National Guard divisions that were first organized. In addition to these rifles we also had in stock some 200,000 Krag-Jørgensen rifles that had been stored for an emergency and were in sufficiently good condition to be used for training purposes. In addition, efforts were made to speed up the manufacture of new Springfields.

It was soon found, however, that manufacturing difficulties would make it impossible to increase the output of Spring-